

# STRESS BUSTERS



## MANAGING THOUGHTS

Be aware of thoughts, feelings and behaviours. Learn to recognize automatic negative thoughts and reconstruct a more realistic thought. Some examples of distorted thoughts:

- > All or nothing thinking: Thinking in black and white categories.
- > Overgeneralizations: Using words like always and never.
- > Mental filter: Ignoring positives and dwelling on negatives.
- > Jumping to conclusions: Mind-reading or making assumptions about outcomes without evidence.

More realistic thoughts offer options and possibilities and help us feel better.

## WORRY TIME

Schedule a worry time and spend that time thinking about your concerns. When you catch yourself worrying outside of your scheduled time, make a note of your concern to bring up in your worry time. Ask yourself what you can do to fix your worries and take action.

## STOP, CALM, AND SWITCH

Notice your automatic negative thoughts. Say “Stop”. Think about something pleasant and say “Calm”, then switch your thinking to a positive thought. An example could be “Nobody is perfect and I am doing my best.”

## RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

### Counselling Services

519-888-4567, ext. 32655  
Needles Hall Addition,  
2nd Floor

### UW Police

Available 24/7  
519-888-4567, ext. 22222

### Health Services

519-888-4096

### Good2Talk

1-866-925-5454

### Here 24/7

1-844-437-3247

### Grand River Hospital

519-749-4300

### CONTACT US

#### Counselling Services

519-888-4567, ext. 32655  
Needles Hall North, 2nd Floor

#### Health Services:

519-888-4096  
Across from the Student Life Centre

 Facebook: @UWaterlooWellness

 Twitter: @UW\_Wellness

 Instagram: @UWaterlooWellness

[uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness](http://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness)

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO  
CAMPUS WELLNESS



UNIVERSITY OF  
**WATERLOO**

PLEASE RECYCLE C016039

# STRESS MANAGEMENT



UNIVERSITY OF  
**WATERLOO**

Campus Well  
Health Promotion

# SELF-CARE PRACTICES

- › Practice ways to wind down
- › Keep regular sleep habits
- › Exercise and get your body moving
- › Eat well and drink water
- › Feed your soul and be creative
- › Find positive support

## GUIDED IMAGERY

**FALLING LEAF:** Stare at a point on the wall across from you. Visualize a leaf on this spot. With each breath, count backwards from 20 to 1 as you watch the leaf slowly drifting to the ground. At 1, the leaf reaches the ground and you are deeply relaxed.

**TEN CANDLES:** Close your eyes and imagine a row of ten lit candles in front of you, any style or colour. As you exhale, imagine yourself blowing out one of the candles. With each successive breath, blow out each candle. Let yourself become more deeply relaxed with each one. When all the candles are out, let yourself enjoy the peace and quiet of the room.

## STANDING MEDITATION

Imagine a tree standing beside you. Breathing deeply, feel your feet rooted into the ground. Imagine the depth of the roots and the strength under you, supporting you. Imagine your body a solid trunk, but one that is flexible and giving. Allow it to sway, slightly bending in the breeze, your arms open like branches, your hands turned like leaves towards the sun. Breathe deeply and think about the strength and beauty of the tree. Feel the depth of the ground and all its support.

## STRETCHING

- › **SHOULDER SHRUGS:** Lift your left shoulder as high as you can, then relax it down, repeat. Now, as you lift your left shoulder, inhale. As you relax your shoulder, exhale. Repeat this with your right shoulder. Then repeat with both shoulders.
- › **SHOULDER ROLLS:** Roll your right shoulder backward in a circular motion, repeat twice. Roll your left shoulder backward in a circular motion and repeat. Roll both shoulders and repeat. Do another set and this time roll the shoulders forward.
- › **RAG DOLL:** Stand with your legs apart and slowly bend at the waist. Let your head and arms hang limply, like a rag doll, shake your arms and hands slowly and loosely, sway softly from side to side, slowly roll up allowing your spine to curve round until standing.

## DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

**1. BE SEATED IN A COMFORTABLE PLACE.**

**2. AS YOU BREATHE IN, THINK “CALM”, AS YOU BREATHE OUT, THINK “RELAX.”**

Repeat 8–10 times. Focus your attention on your breathing and breathe normally.

**3. PLACE ONE HAND ON YOUR CHEST AND THE OTHER ON YOUR DIAPHRAGM (ABOVE YOUR BELLY BUTTON).**

Concentrate to breathe, but be aware of allowing the breath to flow down into this area and pay attention as your diaphragm moves up and down (Your hand will move). Your chest should be still.

**4. BREATHE THROUGH YOUR NOSE AND ALLOW YOUR STOMACH AREA AND DIAPHRAGM TO FILL LIKE A BALLOON.**

Count the breath in and out, starting with a count of three and increase to five or more counts as your breath becomes deeper and slower.

**5. PRACTICE EVERY DAY FOR TEN MINUTES AND USE AS A STRATEGY TO RESPOND TO STRESS: REMEMBER TO BREATHE!**